

## Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
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AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, XB, UR, US

SUBJ: HANDLING SOVIET ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSAL

REF: A. NEW DELHI 9899; B. MOSCOW 10208; C. HONG KONG 8661

1. APPRECIATE HELPFUL COMMENTS REFTELS. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE CONSTITUTES CURRENT STATUS USG THINKING ON SUBJECT OF SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR CREATION OF ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM. INR RESEARCH STUDY DATED AUGUST 14, 1972 (RESS-50), WHICH SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ALL ADDRESSEE POSTS, PROVIDES MORE DETAILED BACKGROUND ON SOVIET PROPOSAL.

2. EXCEPT FOR ENUMERATION OF VARIOUS PRINCIPLES ON WHICH ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SHOULD BE BASED, SOVIETS HAVE BEEN NOTABLY VAGUE IN CLARIFYING WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND. AT LEAST ONE SOVIET COMMENTARY HAS SPOKEN OF SEALING PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY "IN TREATY FORM," BUT THIS HAS NOT BEEN CONSISTENT THEME. IT CAN BE ASSUMED, HOWEVER, THAT SOVIETS WILL SEEK TO USE PRECEDENTS DEVELOPED IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE TO ADVANCE THEIR ASIAN PROPOSAL.

3. ASIDE FROM SHORT TERM ANTI-CHINESE PROPAGANDA  
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PURPOSES SERVED BY STEP UP IN SOVIET ADVOCACY OF THEIR PROPOSAL AT THIS TIME, MOSCOW'S LONGER TERM GOALS PROBABLY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING: TO SUPPORT SOVIET CLAIM TO BE AN ASIAN POWER WITH A RIGHT TO FULL PARTICIPATION IN ASIAN AFFAIRS; TO INHIBIT CREATION OF EXCLUSIVE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE UNDER AEGIS OF CHINA OR OTHER POWERS THAT COULD SERVE TO EXCLUDE USSR FROM CERTAIN AREAS OF ASIA; TO CONFIRM EXISTING ASIAN FRON-

TIERS BY GAINING ENDORSEMENT FOR PRINCIPLE OF FRONTIER INVIOABILITY (THIS IS RELEVANT TO SOVIET BORDER DISPUTES WITH PRC AND JAPAN); TO REDUCE WESTERN INFLUENCE BY ERODING RAISON D'ETRE FOR EXISTING MILITARY PACTS; TO PROVIDE FRAMEWORK CONDUCIVE TO EXPANSION SOVIET ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL LINKS AND ULTIMATELY TO EXPANSION SOVIET POLITICAL AND MILITARY INFLUENCE THROUGHOUT REGION.

4. AT HEART OF SOVIET CONCERN IS PROBABLY USSR'S DEFENSIVENESS OVER ITS POSITION IN ASIA, WHICH UNDER DETERMINED CHALLENGE BY PEKING. EXCLUDED FROM MUCH OF ASIA PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II BY COLONIAL BARRIERS AND ITS OWN CONTINENTAL PREOCCUPATIONS, MOSCOW IS NOW ENGAGED IN CONCERTED EFFORT TO ESTABLISH ITS CREDENTIALS AS AN ASIAN POWER WITH LEGITIMATE INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THE AREA. MOSCOW PRESUMABLY HOPES THROUGH ITS ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SCHEME TO INSTITUTIONALIZE AN "OPEN DOOR POLICY" IN ASIA THAT WILL SERVE BOTH TO FACILITATE SOVIET ENTREE AND TO PREVENT SOVIET EXCLUSION FROM PARTICULAR AREAS OR GROUPINGS, THUS AMONG OTHER THINGS ENHANCING ITS STRATEGIC POSITION VIS-A-VIS PEKING. IN WORDS OF RECENT SOVIET COMMENTARY ON SUBJECT (SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA AUG. 24), SOVIET PURPOSE IS TO ENSURE THAT "NO ONE MAY ENJOY ANY KIND OF ONE-SIDED ADVANTAGES IN THIS REGION."

5. CHINA'S STEADFAST OPPOSITION TO ASSUMPTION BY USSR OF GREATER ROLE IN ASIAN AFFAIRS, COMBINED WITH MOSCOW'S OWN EFFORTS TO CONTAIN CHINESE INFLUENCE AND POWER, INEVITABLY ENSURES THAT SOVIET PROPOSAL APPEARS DIRECTED ABOVE ALL AGAINST PEKING. THIS CERTAINLY IS PEKING'S OWN INTERPRETATION OF SOVIET INTENT, AND CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH CONCEPT FIRST FLOATED IN 1969 LEND WEIGHT TO THIS VIEW. NEVERTHELESS, SOVIET GOALS IN ADVANCING  
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THIS PROPOSAL SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED EXCLUSIVELY IN NARROW SINO-SOVIET CONTEXT SINCE SOVIET INTERESTS IN ASIA ARE NOT PURELY FUNCTION OF USSR'S RIVALRY WITH CHINA, EVEN THOUGH THIS IS CRUCIAL ELEMENT AT PRESENT. MOREOVER, MOSCOW NOW SEEMS TO APPRECIATE THAT OVERT IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL AS AN ANTI-CHINESE SCHEME WOULD SERIOUSLY DIMINISH HOPE OF GAINING BROAD ASIAN SUPPORT. AS RESULT, SOVIET APOLOGISTS FOR CONCEPT HAVE TENDED TO DENIGRATE ANTI-CHINESE ANGLE.

6. INDEED, SOVIET ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF PROPOSAL HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN COUCHED IN UNMISTAKABLY ANTI-US TERMS, AND THE "ANTI-IMPERIALIST" THEME HAS BEEN PROMINENT IN SOVIET ESPOUSAL OF CONCEPT. THUS, SOVIETS EARLIER TOOK POSITION THAT FIRST STEP IN CREATING ASIAN COLLECTIVE

SECURITY SYSTEM MUST BE "THE CESSATION OF IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION IN ASIA AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS FROM THIS REGION." MORE RECENTLY COMMENTARY CITED ABOVE QUOTED SRI LANKA COMMUNIST PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY AS STATING THAT IDEA OF ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY IS "THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO THE 'GUAM DOCTRINE.' "

7. FUNDAMENTAL TO US POSITION IS BELIEF THAT ANY NEW SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN ASIA SHOULD MEET GENUINE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA. IN OUR VIEW, THERE IS REASON TO QUESTION WHETHER SWEEPING AND SEEMINGLY TOOTHLESS SOVIET CONCEPT BASED ON PAN-REGIONAL COLLECTIVE APPROACH MEETS THIS TEST. MOREOVER, WHILE WE DO NOT CHALLENGE EXISTENCE OF LEGITIMATE SOVIET INTERESTS IN ASIA, WE DO NOT WISH TO ENHANCE MOSCOW'S MILITARY PRESENCE OR SECURITY ROLE IN ASIAN AFFAIRS. NEVERTHELESS, WERE WE TO EXPRESS OVERT VIEW ON THIS QUESTION, WE WOULD INEVITABLY APPEAR TO BE SIDING WITH ONE PARTY IN THE SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE.

8. FOR THESE REASONS, AND IN VIEW OF MANY UNANSWERED QUESTIONS CONCERNING SOVIET PROPOSAL, US POLICY THUS FAR HAS BEEN TO AVOID PUBLIC COMMENT ON IDEA OF CREATING ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM. WE DO NOT FEEL ANY USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY OUR GETTING OUT IN FRONT IN SEEKING TO SWAY ASIAN ATTITUDES AGAINST THIS PROPOSAL, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHICH AS TRIAL BALLOON IS STILL ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTY IN GETTING OFF THE GROUND. WHILE AN ENDORSEMENT BY JAPAN, HOWEVER UNLIKELY, OR BY INDIA WOULD OBVIOUSLY REPRESENT SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCE FOR SOVIETS, WE DOUBT EITHER COUNTRY IS LIKELY TO GIVE IDEA SORT OF WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE BREAKTHROUGH IN LINING UP ASIAN GOVERNMENTS BEHIND PROPOSAL. IN FACT, THROUGHOUT EAST ASIA REACTION TO SOVIET PROPOSAL HAS BEEN EVEN COOLER THAN TEPID EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST BY SUCH MIDDLE EASTERN/SOUTH ASIAN GOVERNMENTS AS IRAN AND INDIA. ASEAN GOVERNMENTS IN PARTICULAR HAVE RESISTED SOVIET EFFORTS TO TREAT BREZHNEV PROPOSAL AS COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR DECLARATION ON SEA NEUTRALITY.

9. ON BROADER QUESTION OF OUR OWN CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF ASIA'S FUTURE, WE HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY SPELLING OUT IN PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL FOREIGN POLICY MESSAGES OUR VIEW OF THE ROLE WE INTEND TO PLAY IN THE PROCESS OF REORDERING OUR RELATIONS WITH ASIA. WE DO NOT BELIEVE USG SHOULD SEEK TO SPEAK FOR ASIANS BY ADVANCING OUR OWN "GRAND DESIGN" FOR ASIA'S FUTURE. AS PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS AND PRESIDENT'S POLICY STATEMENT AT GUAM

HAVE MADE CLEAR, WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CREATION OF A STABLE FRAMEWORK OF PEACE IN ASIA, BUT OUR EFFORTS CAN ONLY SUPPLEMENT THE CENTRAL EFFORTS ASIAN NATIONS MUST MAKE THEMSELVES.

10. ACCORDINGLY, US OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN SEEKING TO STIFFEN RESISTANCE TO THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR CREATION OF AN ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM. SHOULD SUBJECT ARISE, HOWEVER, US REPRESENTATIVES MAY DRAW ON ABOVE ANALYSIS (PARAS 2-7), BEARING IN MIND THAT WE DO NOT WISH TO GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONCEPT OR TO IMPLY IN ANY WAY THAT WE CONSIDER IT A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE GENUINE SECURITY PROBLEMS OF ASIA. RUSH

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